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THE PROBABLE DESTINY OF OUR COUNTRY; THE REQUISITE TO FULFIL THAT DESTINY; AND THE DUTY OF GEORGIA IN THE PREMISES.

AN ADDRESS

BEFORE THE

PHI DELTA AND CICERONIAN SOCIETIES

OF

MERCER UNIVERSITY,

DELIVERED ON THE 14TH OF JULY, A. D. 1847

BY

HERSCHEL V. JOHNSON,

HONORARY MEMBER OF THE CICERONIAN SOCIETY

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1847

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Ciceronian Hall, July 14th, 1847

On motion of Col J. E. Walker,

Resolved, That the thanks of the Ciceronian Society be tendered to the Hon. H. V. Johnson, for the able and interesting Address delivered by him this day, before the two Literary Societies of this University, and that a Committee be appointed to request a copy for publication.

In pursuance of the above resolution, the undersigned, Committee of the Ciceronian Society, tender you the thanks of that body, and respectfully solicit a copy of your Address for publication.

Very respectfully,

HENRY M. HOLTZCLAW,
GEORGE T. WILBURN,
JOHN F. DAGG,
Com

Hon. H. V. Johnson.

Penfield, Ga., July 15th, 1847

Gentlemen:

I have received your note of yesterday, covering a resolution of the Ciceronian Society, tendering the thanks of that body for the manner in which they are pleased to say, I discharged the duty assigned me of delivering the Commencement Address before the two Literary Societies of Mercer University, and requesting a copy of the same for publication.

It is gratifying to me to learn that my poor services were acceptable.—Were I to consult my own inclination, however, I should not hesitate to decline to permit the Address to be printed; but it is really the property of the Society, and I feel that I am not entirely at liberty to forbid their making such disposition of it, as they may consider expedient. It is, therefore, herewith handed to you, with all its imperfections.

With my best wishes for your individual happiness and the prosperity of the Ciceronian Society,

I am, Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,
H. V. JOHNSON

Messrs Henry M. Holtzclaw,
George T. Wilburn,
John F. Dagg,
Committee

ADDRESS, &c.

This is a great country.—Great in the amplitude of her diversified, luxuriant and growing territory; great in the magnificent proportions and comprehensive designs of her political, civil and social organization; great in the transcendent glory of her probable destiny.

Her surface extends from the forty-ninth parallel of North latitude, to the tropic shores of the gulf of Mexico, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific wave. It embraces every variety of soil and climate, yields every product needful for the comfort, sustenance and luxurious enjoyment of man, and abounds with every material requisite to give scope to every enterprise within the boundless range of human pursuit. It is traversed in every direction, by the most magnificent rivers, sweeping in silent majesty for thousands of miles, now through virgin forests, now through waving fields, bearing upon their bosoms the freighted messengers of commerce. It contains exhaustless stores of mineral wealth,—iron, tin, copper, lead, zinc, coal, marble, granite, silver and gold: and teams with a thousand bubbling fountains, whose healing waters repair the ravages of disease, and restore the bloom of health to the wan cheek of afflicted humanity. It is diversified with an endless variety of hill and plain, mountain and valley, awakening in the bosom of the enraptured spectator, the loftiest inspirations of poetry and eloquence. It is canopied by as lovely a sky as ever charmed the gaze of the Mantuan bard, and is fanned by as sweetly scented zephyrs as ever awoke the melody of Tasso's lyre. This landscape, with its amplitude of dimensions, its exuberant variety of beauty and grandeur;. this landscape, which far surpasses the Elysium of which Diodorous and Plato dreamed; this landscape, where

* * * * "Nature show'd
The last ascending footsteps of the God,"

is our country—"our own, our native land."

Our political organization does not differ in its elementary powers from all others. Every government, whatever its form,—whether aristocratic, monarchical or democratic,—must possess the law-making, the law-expounding and the law-executing functions. It must have its legislative, judicial and executive departments. These are the constituent attributes of sovereignty; and the character of a government is determined by the depository with which they are lodged.—Hence the grand feature of difference between our government and others, consists in the transfer of sovereignty from

the King or the aristocracy, to the people. The democratic principle is also modified by that of representation, which in our system, approximates nearer perfection,—that is to say, the representative more faithfully reflects the will of his constituency—than in any other government that has ever existed Again: the federal character of our Republic has no precedent on the file of nations. It is peculiar, also, in its mode of choosing those who are the immediate agents for the exercise of its functions. Neither the time nor the occasion would justify a labored consideration of these characteristic features.—It is sufficient, however, to observe, that they are but manifestations of the popular principle and developments of the method of its operation in our political system—how it enters into all its ramifications, from the duties of a district Constable, up to the Chief Magistracy of the Union.

What wonders has this distinguishing feature of our government wrought, and is destined still to work, upon the prospects of man and the fate of empires! It has confounded the old doctrine of the "Divine right of Kings." It is rapidly sweeping away the ancient landmarks between the favored classes and the lower walks of society; and it must transform the political, social and moral condition of the world. Its essential ingredient is the equality of all men. Nor does it contemplate this equalization, by humbling those who are elevated to a level with those of inferior rank, but by lifting those that are depressed, to a height as lofty as that of the most exalted. The old despotisms of Europe are erected upon this degradation of the masses. The titled and honored by birth, are not great in the abstract, but in comparison only with those whom their odious system of government oppresses. Here, there is no titled nobility; but all are noblemen who practice the virtues and discharge the duties of American freemen. Here, there is no hereditary line to political honor, or literary distinction; but fame throws wide the portals of her "proud temple," and stands ready to crown alike, with her chaplet of green, every votary who makes his toilsome pilgrimage to her shrine. The effect of all this is, to inspire self-respect, impart personal dignity, and stimulate all the faculties of the mind.

Another remarkable observation of our popular principle is, that it constitutes public opinion the arbiter of every question. This august tribunal is composed of all the people, and every man has an equal voice in its deliberations. Before it are discussed the most important measures of public policy; the most abstruse principles of science, and the most momentous doctrines of ethics. From its decisions, there is no ultimate appeal. Its decrees are irresistable, and its errors can only be corrected by the enlightening influences of time and reflection

Who can estimate its probable effects upon the character and destiny of this country and the world? It unshackles conscience, thought, speech, the press; and, consequently, gives birth to eloquence, form and power to argument; opens an arena for the exercise of the noblest energies and loftiest enterprises, and enlarges the field of literature and science.

It were not difficult, if left to conjecture, to foresee the fruits of a political and social organism, based on such principles and permitted to operate on such materials, in the direction of its legitimate tendencies. But the experience of more than half a century is realizing the hopes and expectations of the wise and benevolent founders of our government. That which was the bright anticipation of the future to them, has become happy reality to us. Instead of thirteen States, enfeebled and worn down by the struggles of the revolution, inhabited by three millions of people sparcely scattered over their territory, the Confederacy is now composed of twenty-nine flourishing States, which sustain a population of twenty millions, and present to the world a spectacle of enterprise and prosperity, in the career of national greatness, unparalleled in the annals of the world. The aborigines fade before the march of civilization; the wild and boundless forests which they traversed in the untamed freedom of savage pursuits, give place to smiling fields and populous cities; and the thundering torrent, to whose genius of winds and storms, they knelt in blind adoration, now lends its current to the wants of commerce and the arts of cultivated society. Science and religion have reared their thousand temples; poetry and philosophy have their votaries; and eloquence, from the animated lips of our statesmen and divines, pleads the cause of human freedom and the claims of heavenly revelation. Our friendship is already courted by the proudest governments of Europe; our commerce, protected by our stars and stripes, whitens every sea; and our prowess in arms, commands the respect of all nations, and strikes with unspeakable awe the incumbents of despotic thrones. Thus far we have demonstrated the capacity of man for self-government, and, by the successful operation of the popular principle, have dealt a death-blow to oppression. Who then, if the past throws any light upon the developments of the future, can doubt the glory of our country's destiny? "Who shall say for what purpose a mysterious Providence "may not have designed her! Who shall say that, when, in "its follies or its crimes, the old world shall have interred all "the pride of its power or the pomp of its civilization, human "nature may not find its destined renovation in the new?"

Nor is it ascribing too much wisdom and foresight to our political fathers, to suppose that they contemplated such sub-

time results. As if animated with the inspiration of prophetic visions, they looked far down the vista of the future, and caught enrapturing glimpses of a continent consecrated to free institutions and destined by Providence to be the theatre on which should be wrought out the redemption of man from the fetters of darkness in which his intellect and conscience had been bound for ages; the broad arena in which should be exhibited the developments of the highest civilization and the happiest manifestations of the social state. It was for this, they laid broad and deep the foundations of our republican institutions, interwove into their structure the great cardinal principles of equality and popular sovereignty, and breathed into the wonderful fabric the life-giving spirit of religious toleration. Prior to the discovery and settlement of America, the old world, as now, was crowded with a dense population, polluted in their religion, depraved in their morals and oppressed by the yoke of tyranny. Their temples were profaned, their altars desecrated and their worship stained with idolatry and superstition. Our ancestors sought a refuge from these evils and hitherward, by a well-ordered train of providential events, were borne. They came,—the Bible, their chart, freedom, their motto, this magnificent continent, their temple, and their Divinity, God. Every object in their new home awakened fresh devotion and kindled the inspiration of a holier love; and here in this virgin soil, untouched by the heel of the oppressor, they planted and watered with the tears of piety, the seeds of religion, literature and freedom, for the healing of the untold millions who shall throng these Western shores. Then, shall not Heaven perfect what, through the instrumentality of these pious pilgrims, was begun in the fervor of filial faith, animated and encouraged by His benignant smiles!

The design of God, in reference to the future glory of our country, is unequivocal to the mind of the christian philosopher who believes in the sublime doctrine, that the hairs of our heads are all numbered. Upon any other supposition, how inscrutable and apparently unwise are His dealings towards the aboriginal tribes of this continent! Behold how rapidly they disappear before the progress of the Anglo-American race! From the evidences of the past, there is strong probability that they are doomed to extinction. Having hitherto almost entirely resisted efforts for their civilization, and eschewed social incorporation with the whiteman, they must, while they persist in such a policy, continue to recede before his approaches, until finally the blaze of their council fires shall expire in the darkness of total extermination. Like us, they are creatures of God, made in his image, and endowed with intellect. They are a brave and hardy race and they

possess many, though savage virtues. But they refuse to cultivate the earth, which is the first great law of civilization; and they roam the forest, wild as the game they chase in pursuit of subsistence. Ignorant of the true God, they worship their Great Spirit, as he whispers in the breeze, roars in the cataract, or thunders in the storm. It is not, therefore, for the mere purpose of exchanging one race for another, that the Indian tribes are thus permitted by the Divine Being, to be driven before the mighty tide of white population. This were unworthy his wisdom and beneficence. But it is to substitute civilization, in all its beauty, excellence and glory, for barbarism, in all its cruelty, deformity and degradation. It was for this, that the infant colonies, in their weakness and paucity of resources, were shielded against the daring intrepidity, or the ambushed assassinations of these fierce and numerous nations. It is for this, that their title to the soil has been gradually extinguished, by treaty stipulations, to meet the emergencies of increasing population. It is for this, that in all our border contests, since the formation of our government, our arms have been victorious and our savage neighbors awed into respect for rights which they did not recognise.

Some physiologists ascribe this change of population to a law of nature, which indicates a vegetable diet as the proper food of man. Fowler illustrates the idea thus:—"A "given amount of territory will sustain probably a thousand "Anglo-Americans by agriculture, to one Indian by the chase. "Suppose the earth already stocked with human beings—shall "this one Indian be allowed to engross what would support a "thousand human beings better than he is sustained? If the "Indian would be content with his thousandth part of his ter-"ritory, let him remain; but he has no right to interrupt the "existence of nine hundred and ninety-nine human beings, still "better capacitated to enjoy life than himself. Hence, nature "has so ordained it, that the Indian shall recede before the "march of civilization, unless he incorporates himself with it; "because a vegetable diet can sustain so many more happy "beings than the savage state."[7] This, however, does not conflict with, but rather confirms what has been observed, relative to the design of Providence, in the *substitution* of the white for the redman on this continent. It explains the rationale of the process, but the Creator is still the author of that law, by whose agency it is accomplished. The order of the solar system is preserved by the laws of centripetal and centrifugal forces. But God endowed those immense masses of matter with these regulating principles, and He is, therefore, a

[7] Fowler's Physiology, p. 85.

emphatically the author of the motions of the planets, as if he controlled their revolutions without any intermediate and secondary agencies. So it is in reference to the gradual disappearance of the North-American Indians. If the ordinance of nature by which Dr. Fowler seeks to explain the fact, does indeed exist, it is the established instrumentaly by which, the Supreme Ruler operates, for the accomplishment of his wise and benevolent purposes. Therefore,

* * * "Another race has fill'd
"Those populous borders—wide the wood recedes
"And towns shoot up, and fertile realms are till'd;
"The land is full of harvests and green meads."

The *character* of the settlers and the *time* of the permanent settlement of this country are remarkable. They were not the subjects, the degraded offcasts of Spain and Portugal, who knew no liberty but what a gloomy despotism tolerates. If it had been by such, that the seeds of civilization were planted in the new world, how different might have been our condition today? Instead of reposing under the ægis of a government which guarantees equal rights, and secures freedom of speech and conscience, we might have been yoked to a tyranny whose onerous exactions would be limited only by our ability to indure. But they were Britons; emigrants from a country whose people were more virtuous, more intelligent, and better acquainted with the true nature of political institutions, than any portion of civilized Europe. They came just at the *time* also, when the Puritans had laid the foundations of English liberty, on the ruins of that tyranny which characterised the reigns of Henry and Elizabeth. Was it the result of accident or benevolent design, that the most suitable men and the most propitious time were chosen for the permanent settlement of these Colonies and planting those principles of rational liberty which should elevate and bless unborn millions? It were ingratitude and infidelity to Heaven to deny his special agency in these striking events—events calculated to change the tide of empire and redeem the world. Washington seems to have been deeply impressed with this same fact. He said, "The "foundation of our empire was not laid in the gloomy age of "ignorance and superstition, but at an epoch when the rights "of mankind were better understood."*

In the circumstances and events of the American Revolution, the hand of Providence is distinctly seen. Who can contemplate its thrilling incidents and fail to be impressed, that God presided over the arms of our fathers, enlightened their councils, and inspired their patriotism? They drew the sword in weakness, almost destitute of clothing, arms, ammu-

* Vid. Letter to the Governors of the States, 5th vol Marsh. p. 43.

nation, without discipline, without a navy, and without an ally among the family of nations. They "assumed the front of "war against a nation, one of the most formidable in the world! "A nation, ready and armed at all points! Her navies riding "triumphant in every sea; her armies never marching, but to "certain victory."* Yet, on almost every battle field from Lexington to Yorktown, American arms were victorious, and the Lion quailed before the burning eye of the undaunted Eagle. The immortal Henry spoke truly when he said "the battle is not to the strong;" and there was prophecy, as well as faith, in the rapture of his fervid eloquence, when he exclaimed, "Sir, we shall not fight our battles alone.— "There is a just God, who presides over the destiny of nations, "and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us."— The prediction was fulfilled, and in due time France, stimulated by the chivalry and disinterested generosity of the gallant La Fayette, came to our rescue. Washington, by the same Power that commissioned Joshua, at the head of the hosts of Israel to conquer Palestine, was endowed with the lofty qualities of mind and heart, to lead our armies successfully. Wise in council, profound in design, energetic but judicious in execution, and brave without being rash, he secured the confidence of officers and soldiery; so that he was blessed with the rare faculty of quieting discontents, suppressing mutiny and inspiring his troops with patience and fortitude to endure the untold hardships and sufferings of the protracted conflict.

The period immediately preceding the adoption of our Federal Constitution, is remarkable in the annals of our government. The Articles of Confederation having failed to realize the design of their authors, the United States, in the language of Judge Willson, presented to the world "the first instance "of a nation, unattacked by external force, unconvulsed by "internal insurrections, assembling voluntarily, deliberating "fully and deciding calmly, concerning the system of govern- "ment under which they would wish themselves and their "posterity to live."† The history of the times shows what differences of opinion prevailed among our ablest statesmen, as to the provisions of a new Constitution, and with what bitterness and asperity they were expressed and advocated. In May, 1787, the Convention assembled, composed of the wisest and best men of the day,—such as Washington and Madison, Willson and Pinckney, Hamilton and Franklin, Baldwin and Morris,—and continued in session nearly four months, deliberating on the details of a Constitution for the government of the

* Vid. Wirt's Life of Patrick Henry, p. 118.

† Vid. Eloq. U. States, vol. 1, p. 6, 7

United States. What a crisis of intense interest, of incalculable moment was this, to the destiny of this continent and the hopes of the world! Lycurgus and Solon successively gave laws to Sparta, Romulus and Numa to Rome,—territories smaller in extent than that of Georgia; and for this, their names have been borne upon the tide of history, crowned with the praises of poetry and eloquence. But it was left for the founders of our government to organize a system for a continent, equal to one-fourth of the habitable globe; and that too, without a single model based upon the federal representative principle in the annals of the world. He who will read the debates of that august assembly, consider the variety of plans and amendments that were offered, and the ability with which they were advocated, must be amazed at the ultimate unanimity with which, our present Constitution was adopted. It received the signature and sanction of every member except Randolph, Mason and Gerry.* Whence this spirit of harmony, conciliation and compromise? Why this surrender of conflicting opinions and favorite plans? Has the world ever seen, since the august assembly of Westminster Divines, such large and free offerings upon the altar of the common good?

But this Constitution was yet to be ratified, by nine out of the thirteen States, before it became obligatory on those that might ratify it. What a momentous crisis! What consequences were suspended upon the issue! To reject the new Constitution, was either to fall back upon their separate sovereignty, as independent States, or upon the Articles of Confederation. The former was forbidden by the sad lessons of history, which teach that small contiguous and separate States have never existed long without collisions, which ultimately terminated in their subversion or subjugation. The latter was equally repugnant to what the circumstances indicated to be a safe policy; for public confidence in the Confederation being shaken, it would certainly prove less efficient for the purposes of government, than past experience had already demonstrated. We can conceive that a body of men like those composing the Convention—intelligent, prudent and patriotic—might harmonize; but how fearful the question when offered to the decision of the people, jealous of their rights and reluctant to delegate new and enlarged powers to the general government!

To increase the dangers of a successful result, France, at this period, was struggling for popular government, stimulated by the example of these States; and her failure terminated in the horrid scenes of her bloody revolution. She had the warm sympathies of our people, both in her efforts at liberty and

* Vid. Madison Papers, vol. 3d, p. 1624.

in her hostility to England. But her revolutionary spirit never visited these shores, and after calm and deliberate reflection, the people of the several States adopted the new Constitution, and called Washington from his retirement to conduct its administration. Was all this the result of chance?—Was it chance that guided the deliberations of the Convention to wise conclusions?—that preserved the popular mind from fatal dissention?—that influenced the States to adopt, link by link, this golden chain which unites them in the bonds of political fraternity?—that neutralized the influences of the French Revolution, and that shielded our country in the infancy of her strength, from the demon-spirit of Atheism, which convulsed that nation with volcanic throes and scattered far and wide its burning lava, that threatened to consume all that had been achieved by Christianity for ages? No, no.—Every patriotic and pious heart, in the fullness of its grateful emotions, adopts the language of Israel's minstrel, "This is the Lord's doing: it is marvellous in our eyes."*

The same beneficent Providence has led us, as a nation, in each succeeding step of progress, down to the present time; shed victory upon our colors in the war of 1812; tamed the rage of popular fury, when the storm spirit of party has pervaded the land; preserved us from disunion, amid the earthquake agitations of the Missouri Compromise and South-Carolina Nullification;—and maintained our peace with England, through the successful negotiations of our North-Eastern and North-Western boundaries.

There is much, too, in the progress of scientific improvement, to impress our minds with the design of Providence, in reference to our country. The Mariner's Compass and the art of Printing have wrought wonders. The one gave this Continent, and the other, the Reformation to the world. The one is the handmaid of commerce; the other, the messenger of intelligence. The one navigates the ocean of waters; the other, the ocean of mind. But it was reserved for the genius of the United States, to append to these mighty instruments of human progress wings, that they might fly. This has been done by the discovery of the application of steam power to machinery, and of the Magnetic Telegraph. Without these, it would seem, the march of civilization were too slow: time and space must be annihilated. A few years ago, it required months to perform the voyage of the Atlantic, from an American to an European port; and he who embarked took leave of friends and kindred and home, with a sadness indicative of the uncertainty of ever again returning to their embraces. None went,

* Vid. Psalms, cxviii, v. 23.

except in obedience to the call of business or duty. But now a few days complete it in safety, and trips of pleasure are far more frequent, than were formerly those of business. A few years ago, it required weeks to communicate intelligence from New-York to New-Orleans; now, by the aid of steam, it is accomplished in a less number of days; and, by the aid of the Magnetic Telegraph, will very soon be accomplished in a less number of minutes. Now, the difficulty of intercommunication between remote extremes of a country and its centre, has been justly regarded as a very formidable objection to the extension of a republican government over an immense territory. But by the assistance of these wonderful agencies, communication can be had with all necessary and desirable dispatch, from one end to the other, of an entire continent; and for all purposes of intelligence, business and social intercourse, if our Republic embraced the whole of North-America, it would cover less territory, than when it was composed of the original thirteen States. The news of a foreign invasion at one point, and of domestic insurrection at another, and the means of repelling the former and suppressing the latter, could be transported with more ease, in less time and at smaller expense, than they could over one-fiftieth of the territory, forty years ago. It is impossible for the human mind to conceive of the effects, which these improvements are to have upon the social and business relations of nations and the several States of this confederacy. But if, in the dispensations of Providence, year by year, the obstacles and objections to the continued extension of our territory, even to the embrasure of the entire continent, are being removed by the achievements of science, is it not reasonable to infer that, it is His ultimate purpose, to bring the whole of North-America under the benign influences of our free institutions? By many, these discoveries are regarded as mere exhibitions of the power and resources of the human intellect,—as splendid *accidents* in the progress of science. But the wisest and best men, like the great Newton, see in them all the traces of a hand Divine. They are considered, and not without reason, as fulfilments of the prophetic vision of Daniel, which is written, "*many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased;*"* and of the remarkable language of Job, when he says, "*Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go and say unto thee, Here we are?*"†

The object of the foregoing observations is, to illustrate and enforce this proposition: That it is the probable design of Providence, that this continent, through the instrumentality of our republican institutions, shall be the broad theatre for the de-

*Vid. Daniel xii ch. v. 4. †Vid. Job xxxviii ch. v. 35.

velopment of the highest civilization and the happiest manifestations of the social state. It has been argued that, this design is foreshadowed by the nature, genius and tendencies of our political and social organization; by the gradual receding of the Indian tribes before the march of civilization; by the peculiarly propitious state of things in Great Britain, at the time when her emigrants made permanent settlements in the Colonies; by the miraculous triumphs of our fathers over the difficulties of the Revolution, and the dangers that surrounded them at the adoption of our Federal Constitution; by the preservation of our Union from domestic convulsions and foreign invasions; by our unexampled growth in territory, population and national greatness;—and by the achievements of scientific discovery over the obstacles to the unlimited enlargement of our borders.

Nor is the proposition startling. There is nothing in the universe that does not indicate design. It is seen in the smallest blade of grass that vegetates in the earth, and the weakest insect that creeps upon its surface; in the bright effulgence of the blazing orb of day, and the minutest mite that floats in his beams; in the grand systems of worlds that wheel through the "void immense," and the latent gravity that binds them in their track. Then, shall it be said in reference to man, who has been created "a little lower than the angels,"* that the Supreme Being exercises no superintending control? That nations and empires rise, flourish and decay, without His guidance and care? And that the whole history of our race is made up of events, *happening* without design in their origin or in the order of their sequence? "Not a sparrow falls to the ground without His notice," and we have the assurance that, the humblest human being is "of more value than many sparrows."† He is but a superficial observer of the world's progress, who does not see that, amid the desolation of kingdoms and the blood-shed of revolutions, civilization has forced on its glorious march, as if guided and controlled by the purposes of great, noble and beneficent design. Consider the dealings of God with the children of Israel in the wilderness.—how he protected, fed and crowned them with victory. Was it not to accomplish a definite purpose? Consider the condition of the world at the fall of Constantinople. That city was at that time the asylum of science and scholars, after their banishment from Western Europe by the invasion of the Northern barbarians. It was the central point from which, there was a lingering hope left, that the light of knowledge might again diverge and dispel the moral gloom which shrouded the mind of

*Vid. Hebrews ch. II, v. 7. †Vid. Mathew x ch. v. 29, et Luke ch. XII, v. 7.

man. But in 1445, it fell before the banner of the Turks, and with it, were supposed to have expired the faint glimmerings of knowledge and virtue, which had begun to dawn upon the world. But it was for Providence to bring "light out of darkness, and order out of confusion." The event proved to be the harbinger of morning, the day-star of the Reformation. Now, it is true, we have not seen the pillar of fire and of cloud, nor the manna dropping down from the gentle Heavens, nor the waters of Jordan dividing and standing as a wall; but we have had evidences as unequivocal of the favor of Providence, and his design to rear on this continent the noblest structure of freedom and civilization that has ever blessed mankind. It was in this, that our forefathers trusted in the hour of peril.* In this, is our safety and security. In this, are garnered up the hopes of all coming generations. Without it, what were man? What were society, left to the guidance and caprice of passion and appetite! What were civil government, in the hands of men, depraved and unrestrained by that invisible Power, who distils the dews, rules the seasons and regulates the rolling spheres!

Now the will of God is the supreme law of the universe, and, whether promulgated by direct communication or by Providential indications, it is alike obligatory on man. Here, then, we stand, the connecting link between the generations that are past, and the generations that are to come. Here we stand, the tenants in trust, for the benefit of posterity, of this goodly heritage—this magnificent country, with all its capacities and resources, and this republican fabric, with all the wisdom of its provisions, the comprehensiveness of its policy and its far-reaching designs for the distant future. Here we stand, and as memory performs her pilgrimage to the green graves of our political sires, and in the transports of overflowing gratitude, recounts their sacrifices, their toils and their virtues; and as the imagination wings her adventurous flight and catches bright glimpses of the unfolding glories of approaching years and the rising destiny of coming generations, the voice of Providence, speaking through the long concatenation of events, significant of palpable purpose, points us to our duty. How momentous, how solemn!

What is that duty? It is, by a faithful co-operation with the will of Heaven, to work out for posterity and this ample continent their bright and glorious destiny of freedom and high civilization.

How is this to be done? The Supreme Being operates by means. It is to be done, then, by the preservation and proper

*Vid. Declaration of Independence, last sentence.

employment of the means which, in His providence, have been ordained to accomplish the great and noble work. But we have seen that our government is probably that grand instrumentality; and therefore we must preserve its integrity, its institutions from decay, its objects from perversion, and its principles from violation.

A free press, free suffrage, free religion and free education are the bulwarks of civil liberty. Blessed with these, no people can be subjugated; they will be as invincible as the giant of Gaza. Without them, they are slaves already.

In this country, the press is unfettered by solemn constitutional provision.* In the form of newspapers, periodicals and books, it circulates every species of intelligence and every production of the mind. It is the channel of thought and argument. It is the medium through which are viewed the conduct and relations of men; the policy and operations of government; the social and business intercourse between communities and nations. It is the great agency by which public opinion is formed and directed. It is, therefore, an engine of incalculable power for good, and its freedom should be guarded with untiring and sleepless vigilance.

But its freedom, however important, does not preserve it from, but rather tempts it into licentiousness; and there is no greater curse to any country than a licentious press. It assails private character; misrepresents the opinions, conduct and motives of men; distorts facts; states falsehoods; appeals to the passions, instead of the reason of the people;—and thus, often engenders a storm of popular excitement, which, in its fury, strikes down the landmarks between virtue and vice, and prostrates the barriers which the law has erected to restrain violence and insubordination. It is, therefore, an engine of incalculable power for *mischief* as well as *good*, and its *purity* should be watched with as wakeful an assiduity, as its *freedom*.

How then is its purity to be preserved? The Constitution stands guard over its *freedom*, strengthened and sustained in its holy vigils, by the sacred recollections which gather about it from the ages that are past,—recollections of the toil and blood and treasure which it has cost. But no flaming sword gleams to drive off the demon spirit of *licentiousness*, as he approaches with feathered tread, to breathe into its very vains, pollution and poison and death. Public sentiment alone, is its guardian against this fearful tendency. But what is greatly to be dreaded is the fact, that the press forms public sentiment, and is therefore armed to a great extent, with the

*Vid. Const. U. States, § 83. Art. 1.

power of sustaining its own corruption. They mutually act and react upon each other. A licentious press vitiates the public mind, and a depraved public taste encourages the impurity of the press; whilst a pure press corrects public sentiment, and a correct public sentiment restrains the press within its legitimate sphere. The only safety, therefore, against these evils, is to *educate the people*. Do this, and they will be capable of appreciating truth and detecting falsehood, and of distinguishing between facts and their distortion; actions and their misrepresentation; appeals to their passions and appeals to their reason. Educate the people, and you promote an elevated and healthful tone of public opinion, and thereby preserve not only the *freedom*, but the *purity* of the press.

Our political system rests upon the doctrine that man is capable of self-government; and hence, the freedom of the elective franchise. The ballot box is the mouth-piece through which, the concentrated will of the people utters its decisions—authoritative as law—and promulgates its mandates—potent as destiny. No argument is necessary to impress the mind of an American audience with its importance. It is fundamental; and its denial by the mother country unsheathed the sword of the revolution. Upon its judicious and proper exercise, depend the durability of our institutions and the hopes of a continent, which they have been established to redeem. What, then, are the requisite qualifications to enable every citizen thus to exercise it? He ought to be *firm*, to resist the trickery, the persuasion and the seductive approaches of the designing demagogue; he ought to be *independent*, to pursue the convictions of his own judgment, irrespective of mere personal prejudices or predilections, and despite the blinding influences of party associations; he ought to be *intelligent*, to understand the principles involved in the issues to be determined, the merits of the candidates and the true interest of the country; and he ought to be *virtuous*, to give proper direction and control to his *firmness*, his *independence* and his *intelligence*. To possess these high qualifications, *must not the people be educated?*

It is now generally conceded that public morality is indispensable to the stability of a Republic. It is that power in society which sustains the law in its protection of personal security and private property; maintains the public peace, the inviolability of contracts, and the sacredness of oaths; and rescues from overthrow those religious institutions which we have adopted as part an parcel of our civil polity. Destroy this and the bond of the social compact is severed, anarchy reigns triumphant and revolution spreads her bloody banner over the desolation which is created Penal statutes may ut-

ter their anathemas against crime and proclaim the terrors of the gallows to the murderer; but unless they be the true exponents of the popular will—the echos of public morality, they will be as impotent as packthread to restrain the lawless.—The force of these truths is fully illustrated by the fact, that all civilized,—it might be said, all—governments, have recognised the claims of religion, in their organization. The only instance in which the experiment has been made without it, affords mournful demonstration of its indispensibility. The history of the French revolution is a sad commentary upon the capacity of man, however enlightened, to maintain government in contempt of religious obligations. Hence, the framers of our Republic looked with confidence, to the efficacy of religion to maintain public morality, and ordained the freedom of its exercise. But the freedom of religion alone, does not necessarily secure public morality. A man may be at liberty to worship God when and where and how he may please, and yet he may be blinded by superstition, inflamed with bigotry and animated with a spirit of the most implacable and unrelenting intolerance. He may have the zeal of Paul, and yet, if a slave to error, he may, in the name of religion, violate all the rights of person and property, and commit the grossest outrages against the well-being of society. Of the truth of these assertions, the history of persecution in all ages, bears ample testimony.—Religion, therefore, must not only be *free*, but it must also be *enlightened*. Who can be expected to appreciate the claims of moral obligation, if he cannot read and understand for himself, The Sacred Book, hoary with time and vital with the spirit of Divinity?

Nor is the *freedom* of religion secure in the hands of an ignorant people, although it has thrown over it the iron panoply of constitutional guaranty. When ignorance predominates over intelligence in any community, that community is at the mercy of passion and faction; and if to these elements, you add bigotry, the legitimate offspring of unenlightened religion, constitutional prohibitions are as worthless as the parchment on which they are printed. At no period in the history of man, have ignorance and intolerance, when in the ascendency, ever been curbed by paper restrictions. Like the inundations of the Nile, they sweep before them all opposition to their progress; but unlike the inundations of the Nile, they leave behind no fertilising deposit. Therefore, to guard against these evils,—to secure intelligence in religion, and thereby public morality, let the lights of *public education* illumine all our temples.

Reference has already been had to our maxim, that all men are equal. It is to be feared that this is too little appreciated.

It seems to be regarded rather as a theme for panegyric, on anniversary occasions, than as a feature of real practical value in our system of government. It is indeed the basis of that provision of our Federal Constitution, which utterly forbids the granting of titles of nobility.* It is upon this principle, that the capital, labor and employment of all men are regarded with equal favor. It is unfriendly to the encouragement and protection of one class, at the expense of all others, and to the granting of monopolies and exclusive privileges. As before remarked, it is one of the distinguishing features between our government and the despotisms of Europe; and it has been handed down to us, consecrated by revolutionary blood. Now, there is nothing in all the circle of moral agencies, so well calculated to preserve this equality *in fact*, as the diffusion of a high degree of intelligence among the people. Nothing more surely begets classes and distinctions in society, than an unequal and partial distribution of the blessings of education; and although the one class may not be known by the title of Baron, or Duke, or Lord, nor the other as Peasantry,—though one may not be styled Patrician and the other Plebeian: yet the distinction is just as palpable, and fraught with evils as grievous, as if it existed by constitutional sanction. It is general intelligence alone that elevates, ennobles and dignifies society; that can check the progress of partial legislation, restrain the tendencies to the concentration of power in the hands of favored monopolies, and place the poor on a footing with the rich, in the contest which is, and probably ever will be waged between capital and labor. The legislative power may not dare to confer titles of nobility, *eo nomine*. This would call up from their tombs the indignant ghosts of the revolutionary fathers. But unless the people are intelligent to understand their rights, to trace the effects of legislation and detect its evils, this very principle of equality will be violated, and infinitely greater mischief inflicted, in the conferring of exclusive privileges and protecting one class at the sacrifice of all others. The mischief is greater, because in the one case, it is only creating distinctions *in name*, and in the other, distinctions *in fact*. Therefore, to preserve inviolate, in its letter and in its spirit, this important and valuable principle of our government, *let the people be educated*.

When Numa Pompilius established the College of the Vestals, he told the Roman people that the safety of the empire depended on the preservation of the sacred Ancyle, or shield, which they believed had dropped down from Heaven. With similar reverence should we regard the Constitution of the United States. It is our sacred Ancyle, vouchsafed to our poli-

*Vid. Constitution U. States, §IX, Art. 49

tical sires by a beneficent Providence, and transmitted to us, hallowed by the recollections of their revolutionary toils. Upon its preservation depends the integrity of our Union. As we have seen, it is the fruit of mature deliberation, profound wisdom, and magnanimous compromise. To fathom its depths, to rise to the comprehension of its lofty heights, and to survey the amplitude of its policy and the expanse of its boundless designs, present and future, tasks for a lifetime, the gigantic intellects of our ablest statesmen. Yet the gravest questions that can arise under it, however abstruse, however pregnant with the fate of empire, are to be discussed and finally decided by the people. Then *should not the people be educated?*

It has been observed that, from the nature of our political system, public opinion is constituted the arbiter of all questions. This we have seen is true, in reference to preserving the freedom and purity of the press, the purity of the elective franchise, the equality of the people, and the integrity of the Constitution. For there is not one of these important topics, no matter in what shape or under what aspect it may arise, but must pass the review of this august tribunal, composed of all the people, and each entitled to a voice in its deliberations. How infinitely necessary, therefore, that it be enlightened, in order that its decisions may be correct! For this purpose, therefore, *the* WHOLE *people should be educated.*

In kingly governments, when a Prince is born who is the heir apparent to the Throne, hymns of praise are chaunted in the great congregation; the ministers of religion are convoked to consecrate him to the interests and service of the nation, and learned men are placed to watch over his education and develope his mental powers, by training them under the full influences of the light of science. This is all done, because he is to administer the weighty affairs of government; he is the representative of sovereignty; and, therefore, he must be educated to qualify him for the responsible task. In this country, we have no royal princes, but every citizen is born with an inherent eligibility to every office known to our government, from the humblest, up to the Chief Magistracy of the Union. Is our system of government less complicated than others?—By no means; but rather more so. Does it require less ability to administer its departments; less intelligence to discharge the duties of its various offices? Certainly not. Then there exist the same necessity and the same reason that every citizen of a republic should be educated, which obtain in a monarchy, that the King should be: for here every citizen constitutes and represents a portion of the national sovereignty and is eligible to its highest offices. Does not this necessarily involve the pre-

sumption, that in contemplation of our political theory, *the whole people shall be educated!*

If any one department of our government can be more important than another, it is the Judicial. Its province is, to expound the laws, protect the rights and redress the wrongs of every citizen. It throws its coat of mail over the Constitution. It bridles with reins of iron, the assassin and the robber. It stands sentinel, sword in hand, at the hearth-stone of every man's domicil, to drive back the incendiary and burglar. To its keeping are confided social order and public tranquillity.—It is important, therefore, when the citizen appeals to its tribunals, that he may do so with full confidence, that the scale of justice will be poised with impartial hand, and that he will have meted to him the full benefit of the law whose aid he invokes. If he receive injustice, the evil to him is great: for he suffers wrong unredressed. But the injury to society is infinitely worse. It lessens public attachment to, and public confidence in, our institutions. It may not manifest itself in outbreaks of open insubordination; but it, nevertheless, deposits an egg of discontent, which similar occurrences will hatch into a canker worm, at the very heart of our jurisprudential system. But this even-handed justice, delicate and difficult as is the task, is to be administered by a jury of twelve men. Who has not observed the progress of a trial in our courts of justice? It may be that the character, the property, the liberty, or the life of the party is at stake. You see the array of counsel on either side; the cause involves the most vexed questions of pleading and evidence; authorities from the time of Lord Coke, to the day of trial are produced; now the countenance of the Judge assumes the gravest mood, indicative of a deep sense of his solemn responsibility, and now his brow is knit and eye fixed, showing the intellectual effort to solve a doubt; the witnesses are called to the stand; their statements are complicated, confused, contradictory, and it may be, that counsel tax their ingenuity and ply the tortures of cross-examination to make "confusion worse confounded;" the jury in the box are to hear it all, sift and digest the long arguments of counsel, receive and *understand* the law from the Court, unravel the tangled spool of testimony, reconcile its incongruities, harmonize its contradictions, weigh the credibility of witnesses, apply the law to the facts and then, under the obligations of an oath—upon the peril of their eternal salvation, they are to render a verdict which shall do exact and strict justice between the litigants. How few unlettered minds are equal to so delicate and embarrassing a task? But this is a duty which is imperative upon every citizen. However sensibly he may feel his incapacity, however anxious he may be, to avoid the

responsibility, he cannot be exonerated; the law commands to be obeyed. How important therefore, that *every citizen* should be qualified by education, for the discharge of this difficult, but inevitable duty! The Trial by Jury is one of the boasts of our Constitution. It is frequently denominated the sheetanchor of our freedom, the seaman's last resort to hold the ship secure, when the tempest in its wrath scourges the ocean. If the jury be intelligent and free from prejudice, it is no misnomer; but if they be blinded by ignorance and swerved by passion, the vessel of state is at the mercy of the winds and waves.

In the preceding remarks the necessity of public education and virtue, has been illustrated by the nature of our institutions and the principles on which they are founded, without any reference to the extent of territory embraced within the limits of our government. Our whole system rests upon the capacity of the people to govern themselves, which necessarily presumes *knowledge*, to understand *how to govern*, and *virtue*, to give to that knowledge *proper direction*. But how much more striking and palpable their necessity, in view of our increasing territory and population!

Our system, *rightly managed*, contains within itself, the principle of progress, and its legitimate tendency is, to enlarge the boundaries of civilization. Without stopping to discuss this assertion, let it suffice to say, that it is fully illustrated by the past growth of our country in territory and all that elevates and ennobles man. This has been previously considered, in support of the proposition, that the whole of North-America will probably be brought under the influence of our institutions. How sublime, then, are the visions which such a prospect presents to the imagination! What an expanse of territory! What countless millions of human beings, luxuriating in the enjoyment of rational liberty and enlightened civilization! Our triumphant Eagle has already scaled the Rocky Mountains in the North-West; and now she flutters over the halls of the Montezumas, anxious to shake from her wings the blessings of civil and religious freedom. For whilst she grasps the thunderbolt of Mars with one foot, she tenders the Olive branch of peace in the other. Contemplate for a moment the rapid ratio in which, population has increased in the United States. From 1790, to 1840, it swelled from 3,929,287, to 17,063,353. Should it continue to increase at a like rate until the year 1900, it will reach the immense number of more than 150,000,000. Look at the vast resources and capacities of the territory which, within that period, will probably take shelter under the stars and stripes of this confederacy. What fertile plains, what majestic rivers, what exhaustless stores of

mineral wealth! According to the census statistics of 1840,* imperfect as they evidently were, the production of the United States from agriculture, manufactures, commerce, mining, forests and fisheries, amounted to the enormous sum of one billion, sixty-three millions, one hundred and thirty-four thousand, seven hundred and sixty-six dollars. But that census showed a population of less than 18,000,000. How incalculable, then, will be the production, with a population of 150,000,000! Glance a little further down the vista of futurity, if need be, when the Canadas, British and Russian America, and Mexico from the Rio del Norte to the Pacific and from the 49th parallel to the isthmus of Darien, through the instrumentality of our free institutions, shall become the participants of the blessings of rational liberty, and by what rule shall we compute its annual production? Consider further, its production when all this vast extent of territory shall be filled with a population equal to its capability to sustain human life; and the imagination struggles in vain to grasp the immense conception, and mathematical numbers stand mute, bewildered in the mazes of the mighty calculation.

But there is only one condition upon which, these results can ever be realized; and that is, *that popular intelligence and virtue shall increase with territory and population.* Without this, constant accessions to our boundaries can awaken in the bosom of the patriot nothing but the most serious apprehensions. It is true the power or the policy of our government to acquire territory, is not now an open question. It was settled by the fathers of the Constitution when they included the provision that "New States may be admitted into the Union."† It was settled when the Floridas and Louisiana were acquired. It was re-argued and the decision confirmed when the "lone star of Texas" took its place amongst the shining lights of our political constellation. It is also true, that experience has thus far verified the language of Mr. Monroe, in his Message of 1823. He said, "That this expansion of population and "accession of new States to our Union, have had the happiest "effect on all its highest interests. That it has eminently aug-"mented our resources and added to our strength and respect-"ability in power, is admitted by all. It is manifest, that, by "enlarging the basis of our system and increasing the number "of States, the system itself has been greatly strengthened in

*The census tables of 1840, are used in this Address because they contain the most recent sources of statistical information. They are not only very inaccurate in themselves, but doubtless six years have made vast changes in the condition of the country. Their figures, however, are used for illustration, rather than accuracy; and for this purpose they are quite sufficient.

†Vid. Const. U. States, § III. Art. 4.

"both its branches. Consolidation and disunion have thereby "been rendered equally impracticable. Each government "confiding in its own strength, has less to apprehend from the "others, and in consequence each enjoying a greater freedom "of action, is rendered more efficient for all the purposes for "which it was instituted."*

But it should be remembered that, these results have ensued with a sparse population, and doubtless they will continue so long as this state of things shall be kept up by the acquisition of territory. Whilst land is abundant and cheap, it invites to agricultural pursuits; and so long as the great mass of the people are engaged in cultivating the earth, there is but little danger of internal convulsions. In all ages of the world, agriculture has been friendly to the promotion of peace; for it is opposed to idleness, profligacy and vice, and cherishes industry, frugality and virtue. But as population increases, the value of land advances, and hence capital and labor are forced into other channels. The engagements and avocations of men become more various and complicated, their interests more conflicting and thereby, the chances for civil discord multiplied.—People in condensed masses are inflammable, restless, difficult to control, impatient under the restraints of law and prone to yield to the impulses of passion rather than the dictates of reason. The sentiments of Mr. Monroe then, will continue to be true, so long as new accessions of territory shall keep our population diluted.† But the time must come, when the enlargement of our borders shall cease. Then our population will begin to become denser and more dense, and in the method just described, the tendencies, to domestic commotions will be accelerated. Is it not the part of wisdom therefore, to seek a remedy in advance, for these evils? To put it into healthful and vigorous operation, so that it shall counteract them one by one, as they arise, like Hercules cutting off the heads of the Lernean Hydra!

What then is the remedy? Is it to be found in the peculiar nature of our institutions? It is true there is nothing in a republican form of government, in view of the principles on which it is founded, unfriendly to its extension over a wide territory. On the contrary, it is the most favorable of any other form, to such expansion. The nice adjustment of the relationship between the Federal and State governments; the

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*Vid. Prest. Monroe's Message to Cong. 1823.

† If the present population of the U. S. were crowded into the old original thirteen, how long, in view of the pervading ignorance and immorality of the country, would this Republic exist? What but the gradual increase of territory, has thus far saved us from domestic convulsions? A dense and ignorant population cannot maintain a Domestic form of Government.

limitation of the one, to purposes of foreign relations and commerce, and the unabated sovereignty of the other, save for these objects, secure the strength of monarchy on the one hand, for protection and defence, and the freedom of distinct republics on the other, for municipal and domestic regulations. But there is no inherent self-sustaining and self-purifying power in a Republic; and the range which is given to the popular principle, augments the danger of internal convulsions. Then, if not in the character of our institutions, where, let it be again asked, is to be found the antedote for the evils of increasing population? Will you look for it in standing armies? These would be as impotent as stubble before devouring flames, if brought to suppress the storm of popular insurrection; and the circumstances which shall ever create a necessity for the experiment, will demonstrate their total inefficiency. Will you find it in penal enactments and paper constitutions? Sooner expect to bind down Briareus, with fibers of cobweb. The power which impels the machinery of this government is the *people's will:* if that power be misdirected—improperly applied—the machine itself must fail to answer the end of its creation. Public virtue is the oil which preserves its wheels from friction and jarring discord; without it, it will be consumed by the combustion which its own velocity will generate. Then let popular education march *pari passu*, with the increase of population: *education*, elevated and purified with the Heavenly influences of Bible morality—*education* which shall enlighten the popular will, and *morality*, which shall regulate the impulses of the popular heart, and bridle its licentiousness and insubordination. These alone, teach men to understand and respect the authority of law, the sacredness of private rights, and the value of public peace. These alone, open new fields of enterprise when the walks of Agriculture are thronged, diversify the pursuits of society, save the collisions of conflicting interests, explore and develope the resources of the kingdoms of nature and maintain the supremacy of civilization over barbarism and anarchy.

In the benevolence of its policy, our government throws wide its doors to the emigrant from every land; and thousands annually avail themselves of this asylum for the oppressed.—They come into our midst, incorporate themselves with our society and after the requisite residence and legal formalities, they assume the duties and receive the privileges and immunities of citizenship. They come ignorant of our laws and institutions and entertaining natural sympathies for the customs and institutions which they have left. Heretofore, however, emigration has not been sufficient to destroy the homogeniousness of our population. But the recent accessions to

our territory, the happiness which is enjoyed by the free citizens of this Republic, and the miseries consequent upon want and oppression, which exist in the old world, must greatly augment the influx of foreigners to this country. In view of this, many indulge the apprehension, that it may introduce a mixture of population, so different in their political affinities, as to jeopard social order and thwart the legitimate operations of our government. To prevent these dangers, there are those who favor the policy of entirely excluding foreigners from the rights and privileges of citizenship. But this would be repugnant to the genius of our institutions, and would betray a selfishness unworthy the expansive designs of our Constitution. Others, again, insist that our laws of naturalization should be so modified, as greatly to prolong the time of probation. But this would not meet the apprehended danger. For the evil does not consist in their possessing the rights of citizenship; but rather in the fact of their ignorance of the principles of our government.—There is no reforming and enlightening power in the denial of, or a protraction of the probation for, the rights of citizenship. But, on the contrary, rather a discouragement to reformation. By extending to the emigrant the benefits of naturalization laws, he receives a personal interest in the government; feels that it protects his person, his character, his industry and his property. This begets patriotism, and patriotism prompts to allegiance and subordination to the constituted authorities.—The remedy, then, is palpable and obvious. Close not our doors against the wandering exile who seeks shelter from the storm of oppression, under the ample wing of the Eagle of liberty; nor yet protract his time of probation, lest you diminish the strong incentives to industry and virtue, which the prospect of early naturalization, holds out to the foreigner.—But let us have amongst us, so all-pervading an influence of intelligence and morality, that the moment the foot of the emigrant touches our soil, he shall be surrounded by an atmosphere, which will enlighten, elevate and purify his mind and heart. Let him appreciate the value of our institutions, by observing the happiness which they confer, and the force of our laws, by the protection which they afford to person and property. Let his propensities for vice and dissipation, if he have them, be subdued by the entire absence of the means of their gratification. Let him be stimulated to frugality and temperance, by the bright example of their universal practice by ourselves. Public education and morality come in here again, as the great remedy. They compose the leaven which is to leaven the growing mass of our population, preserve its

homogeneousness, and infuse into it the adhesiveness of political affinity.

Glance at this subject in another aspect—the obvious deficiency of public education, for the present purposes and security of the Republic. The census of 1840, exhibits the white population of the United States to be 14,581,553. It is ascertained that about 25 per cent. of that number, or 3,645,368, are between the ages of four and sixteen years. This embraces the period of pupilage. Such an education as to qualify an individual for the duties of citizenship, can scarcely be acquired, with the best facilities, earlier than his arrival at the age of sixteen. In view, then, of the nature of our government, resting as it does upon the indispensible basis of popular intelligence and virtue, the census tables ought to show that almost the entire number of this class of our population, were attending schools, in pursuit of education. But so far from this, they exhibit the appalling fact, that little over one half that number were thus employed, and that the balance, amounting in round numbers to 1,800.000, were not availing themselves of the benefit of schools. It is not doubted that a portion of these have acquired a partial education, and that others will acquire it after they shall have passed the age of sixteen years. But it is equally certain that a very large portion of them are doomed by the decree of poverty to live out their days in unlettered ignorance. The presumption is, that there are only schools and teachers enough to supply those who are at school; and that the balance are unsupplied. Consider, for a moment, then, what a vast deficiency of teachers exists. To educate 1,800,000 children, allowing thirty to each school, would require in the United States, sixty thousand additional teachers; and doubtless that number are needed to meet the pressing emergency. Here, then, are 1,800,000 youths in the United States, under the age of sixteen years, not employed in the pursuit of knowledge. Of this number, thousands since the year 1840, have arrived, and thousands are still arriving annually to the age of twenty-one years, to exercise the elective franchise, influence public sentiment, sit as jurors, holding in their hands the "issues of life and death," and to perform all the high and momentous duties of American freemen; and, on the other hand, the female portion, with like rapidity, have become and are still becoming mothers, whose province it is, to watch over the cradle of infancy, give the earliest impressions and impulses to the mind and heart, and thus lay the permanent foundations of future character for evil or for good.

The same tables show that in 1840, there were in the United States, 549,693 white persons, over the age of twenty years, who could neither read nor write. What portion of these are

entitled to the elective franchise, cannot be accurately known, but certainly not less than one half, or 274,846. Now General Harrison's popular majority over Mr. Van Buren, was 146,081 votes. It was the largest majority ever received by any President except Mr. Monroe. But great as that majority was, it was nearly one-third less than the number of voters in the United States who could neither read nor write. It is obvious therefore, that this class of our voting population, hold the balance of power in this country on all great questions involving the public weal. What a dangerous element! What a tempting prize for the trickery of demagoguism and the pliances of party tactics! How fortunate for the country that they do not ally themselves in mass with either party, but divide themselves about equally, in obedience to the equally strenuous efforts of both parties to obtain their votes! Should not these facts awaken the solicitude of every lover of his country? In connexion with them, consider the means used by politicians and leaders to obtain and preserve the ascendency of their respective parties;—the vituperation and abuse—the fraud and chicanery—the falsehood and misrepresentation—the tendering of false issues and the abandonment of principles—the tasking of their ingenuity to convert every little new development or turn in the progress of affairs into electioneering capital—the lynx-eyed jealousy with which each party watches the other, to detect some act or movement which may turn the tide of popular sentiment and change the "fortunes of the day;"—and who can contemplate the picture, in all its aspects, without gloomy apprehensions for the safety of the Republic! What are we doing to arrest these evils? Where is the virtuous patriotism that animated our forefathers? Where is that devotion to principle which inspired them with the soldier's courage and the martyr's fortitude? Party zeal, like raging fire, has well nigh withered and consumed them all; and the spirit of faction, like a demon from the bottomless pit, revels in our halls of legislation.

Here, then, lies a continent, set apart, as we believe, from the indications of Providence, as the abode of literature, science, religion and high civilization. Three-fourths of it are yet to be redeemed from oppression, from ignorance, from superstition and from barbarism. In one corner of this vast area, has been organized a form of civil government, which, in the principles on which it is founded and the enlarged policy which it contemplates, is well-suited to be the great instrumentality, for this glorious consummation. This instrumentality, to be stable and efficient, must be employed by a people of substantial intelligence, enlarged patriotism, lofty virtue and comprehensive philanthropy. To us, it has been intrusted,

and upon us rests the tremendous responsibility of working out that bright destiny; and that responsibility is enforced by gratitude to our forefathers, duty to posterity and obedience to God. Universal public education is the great moral agency by which these sublime results are to be effected.

How shall such education be furnished to the people? This is one of the most momentous questions, which, as Americans, can ever claim our reflections. It gathers interest from the hoary associations which cluster around the grave of the past, and from the visions which kindle in the distant future. It reaches into the ages of eternity. Shall we look to our schools, academies and colleges? A moment's reflection will show how utterly vain the expectation. We have already seen that there are in the United States 1,800,000 children, under the age of sixteen, not engaged in acquiring education; and that at the rate of thirty to each school, there are wanting 60,000 teachers. Whence are to come this supply of teachers; and, if furnished, whence the means of their compensation and the payment of the tuition of the hundreds of thousands of poor children, who are pennyless and destitute?

Shall we look for aid from the General Government? It is clothed with no power to establish any system of popular education. It is authorised "to promote the progress of science "and useful arts, by securing, for limited times, to authors and "inventors, the exclusive right to their respective writings and "discoveries;"* and in the sale of the public lands, it has reserved a specified section, for the purposes of education in the State in which the land is situated. But beyond this it cannot go; and so impressed was Congress with this absence of Constitutional authority, on the subject of public education, that they experienced great embarrassment, in reference to the Smithsonian bequest. In the Convention of 1787, which framed the Constitution of the United States, Mr. Madison moved to authorise Congress "to establish an University," and on the same day, Mr. Pinckney proposed distinctly to confer the power "to establish seminaries for the promotion of literature and the arts and sciences."† But both propositions were rejected. It is evident, therefore, that this whole matter, vast and important as it is, was wisely and properly left by the authors of the Constitution, to the entire and exclusive action of the several States.

What, then, is the duty of the State of Georgia, in the premises? Evidently, it is to adopt an enlarged and liberal system of indiscriminate public education, which will offer to ev-

*Vid. Const. U. States, §VIII. Art. 33.
†Vid. Madison Papers, vol. 3d, p 1354.

ery white child within her limits, of every class and condition, such facilities as will enable him to read and understand the Federal and State Constitutions, and the laws passed in pursuance thereof; the geography of the globe; the general principles of science, whose application enters into the usual avocations and pursuits of life, and the writings of the sacred scriptures. This much is indispensable to good and valuable citizenship. This much each member of the confederacy owes to all her sisterhood. Georgia has a right to expect it at their hands, and they have the reciprocal right to expect it at her's. Good faith requires its performance. Why? We have seen that our Constitution organizes a form of government, which can answer the ends of its creation, only in the hands of an intelligent and virtuous people; that in the Convention which established the organic law, an attempt was made to clothe that government with authority to act in the premises, which failed; the States were all represented in that body, and voted upon all questions by States. What, then, is the inference? In adopting a system of government which rests upon public intelligence and virtue, and cannot exist without them, and refusing that government the necessary power to promote that intelligence, by organizing a system of public education, is it not clear, that by such refusal, each State assumed the implied obligation of adopting such regulations and measures as would secure the requisite amount of public intelligence? Let it not be supposed that, although there may be this implied obligation on the part of the States to diffuse education among the people, yet it is an obligation referable only to the patriotism and spontaneous generosity of the citizens. It is true, this duty is obligatory upon every man who has the welfare of his country at heart. But the responsibility now spoken of, is one resting upon each State in its corporate character. For the Constitution was not only adopted in Convention by the vote of States; but it was also subsequently ratified, by the separate action of the States. Our government is emphatically a confederacy of the *States*, and not of the *people of the States*. Let it not be said, therefore, that public education is the *one thing needful*, that it lies at the bottom of the structure of our political fabric, and that upon it rests its unutterable interests, and yet there is no obligation upon Georgia, as a State, to educate her people. Fidelity to the Federal compact does imperatively impose upon her this indispensable duty.

This obligation was promptly recognised by a large majority of the original thirteen States, and Georgia amongst that number. Their fundamental laws contain provisions for the promotion of education. It was a matter of too much importance to be left to inference. The Convention which revised

and amended our State Constitution, composed of such men as Jackson and Lamar, Rabun and Spalding, Taliaferro and Talbot, Fort and Nisbet, M'Intosh and Mercer, did not fail to clothe the Legislature with plenary power in relation to this vital subject. They solemnly ordained "That the arts and "sciences *shall* be promoted in one or *more* seminaries of learning," &c.* There can be no ambiguity in this language. The interest of the republic requires the people to be educated; implied faith to the compact demands it; and therefore, in the language of *command*, the Legislature is enjoined to promote this object, by establishing "one seminary of learning," if that will answer the emergency,—if not, then "more" —that is, as many as may be needed to qualify the people for self-government. Nor does the Constitution stop here. Every member of the Legislature, upon taking his seat, is required to swear, among other things, "that he will to the utmost of his power and ability, *conform to*, support and defend the Constitution."† Here, then, the Legislature is constituted the guardian of the public interest, and are *required and commanded* to adopt such measures as shall secure to the people the blessings of good government. For this purpose, public intelligence is indispensable; and therefore, if upon a survey of the condition of the whole State, the General Assembly are of opinion, that there is not a sufficiency of "seminaries of learning," to impart the requisite amount of education to the people, each member is bound by the highest considerations of patriotism, added to the obligations of his oath, to vote to supply the deficiency.

Then are there now in the State of Georgia, enough of "seminaries of learning," to afford to the *whole* people the facilities of a substantial education? Look at facts. According to the census of 1840, there were in the State of Georgia, over the age of twenty years, 30,717 white persons who could neither read nor write; and the aggregate white population was 417,690. Therefore, it seems that in 1840, a fraction over one-thirtieth of the whole population of Georgia, *and that number adults*, were incompetent to discharge intelligently the duties of freemen. Agreeably to the State census of 1845, the white population is 458,169, showing an increase of 40,479, in five years. Therefore, if the number of adults in the State of Georgia, who can neither read nor write, has increased in like ratio, or if it continues to be one-thirtieth of the entire white population, (and there is no reason why it has not) then this unfortunate class of citizens, in 1845, amounted to

*Vid. Const. Geo. § XIII. Art. 160.
†Vid. Const. Geo. § XIX. Art. I.

35,211. Doubtless one half of these are males, entitled to the elective franchise, and eligible to the important offices known to the institutions of our country; and the other half are a portion of the mothers of the rising generation, forming their characters and shaping their career for "weal or wo." Again, according to the best estimates that can be made, as before remarked, it is ascertained that one-fourth of our white population are between the ages of four and sixteen years. Then, taking the State census of 1845, as the basis, and there were in Georgia in that time, 114,542 children between those ages. Ought they not all to be at school? And yet, according to the census of 1840, (which is accurate enough for illustration) and there cannot be a much larger number now, there were but 25,394 of the youth of Georgia, of all ages, attending common schools, academies and colleges. The balance, amounting to upwards of 89,000, are unsupplied, or at least not engaged in the pursuit of education. To furnish the facilities of instruction to these, allowing thirty scholars to each school, there are required in Georgia, the services of two thousand, nine hundred and seventy-one teachers, in addition to those already employed in that business. Could these facts exist, if Georgia, impelled by the parental relationship which she sustains to her people, had faithfully "*conformed* to" the constitutional requisition, which the framers of her government imposed upon her? In the face of these facts, can it be contended for a moment, that there are "seminaries of learning" enough in the State, to qualify *all* her people for self-government? If not, then the constitutional obligation to establish them, is imperative and paramount.

It is not intended to assert, by these remarks, that Georgia has done nothing in the cause of popular education. She has done something; and though evidently not enough to meet the emergency, yet sufficient to show that she recognizes her obligation, and perhaps as much as her circumstances allowed. At the close of the revolutionary war, she was exceedingly feeble and exhausted. She possessed an extensive domain, reaching from the Savannah to the Mississippi river. But with the exception of a small corner in the extreme South-East it was inhabited by fierce and warlike tribes of Indians, against which, it required all her vigilance to protect herself. In 1802, she ceded to the General Government, all her territory West of the Chatahoochee river, in consideration, that the Indian title within her present limits should be speedily extinguished. But yet, she did not obtain absolute sovereignty over her soil, except by the piecemeal process of the treaties of 1814, '17, '18, '19 and '25; and even under the treaty of 1825, the removal of the Indians was not consummated until 1833. The ef-

fect of this gradual extension of her laws over her soil, has been to render her population unstable and fluctuating, and permanent and prospective legislation almost impracticable. To these causes may be added the constant drain upon her population by the immense bodies of rich lands, which have year after year been thrown upon the market, inviting emigration to the South and West; and the continued political excitement produced by the policy of the General Government in relation to the Tariff, a National Bank, Internal Improvements and other kindred measures. It should be borne in mind, also, that shortly after the removal of the Cherokee Indians, she projected the magnificent structure of her Western and Atlantic Rail Road, which more than absorbed all her revenue. These causes have combined to retard her progress in the cause of education, and they afford an apology, if not an excuse, for her remaining so far in the rear of some of her sister States.*

But now that she has acquired entire and undisturbed dominion over all her territory, is increasing in population and wealth, and has made such progress towards the completion of her Rail Road, as will certainly open to her the boundless fertility of the Mississippi valley, the fulness of time has arrived, for her to begin with vigor, a system of public education, commensurate with the demand that exhibits itself at every point, within the compass of her political, social and moral interests. She is invited to the enterprise by considerations as weighty as ever addressed themselves to any people.

Reflect, for a moment upon the physical features of Georgia. She reposes between the Southern spur of the Alleghanies and the flower girt clime of Florida, and therefore embraces almost every variety of soil and climate. The fertile lands that skirt her seaboard from the mouth of the Savannah to St. Marys, yield in luxurious abundance, many of the fruits of the tropics, together with rice, longstapled cotton, maize, sugar and live oak. Adjoining this is a vast belt of country, known as the "Pine Region," abounding with inexhaustible supplies of the best pine in the world, adapted, as is generally conceded, to the cultivation of the vine and silk, and the rearing of cattle and sheep, and is likewise interspersed with large bodies of exceedingly productive cotton lands. Next comes the vast zone of "Middle Georgia," reaching to the base of her mountains, picturesque, salubrious, prolific in the growth of every needed comfort, and possessing in many localities, water power sufficient for the propulsion of the most extensive machinery. Last, by her "Mountain Country," how shall we speak of it?—its magnificence and beauty of scenery, the healthful-

*Vid. this subject ably treated in the S. Q. Review, for Oct. 1845.

ness of its climate, its agricultural fertility, its mountains of granite, and marble, and lime, and iron, resting on beds of coal, and interspersed with veins and deposits of lead, silver, and gold, and its surpassing water power, capable of moving the machinery of the world? By her great Rail Road, she is destined to command the trade of the mighty West, with all its teeming fertility; by the Savannah and all the constituent tributaries of the Altamaha, she shakes hands with the Atlantic and holds commerce with the Eastern World; and by the Chattahoochee and the Flint, she neighbors it with the Islands that dot the stormy bosom of the Gulf of Mexico. Wherever the channels of internal commerce are defective or wanting, her magnificent scheme of Rail Road Improvements, prosecuted with a vigor and liberality worthy an intelligent and patriotic people, is destined soon to make ample provisions. What more could nature, in the profusion of her bounty, have bestowed? Is it not desirable, aye, the highest interest of the State, that these immense resources should be developed and made subservient to the intellectual, moral and social elevation of her inhabitants? That these impetuous currents should lend themselves to the arts of manufacturing, as they journey on to their ocean home? Are her forests to be slain and her lands exhausted by a system of agriculture like that which has heretofore, in the sinfulness of prodigality, wasted and destroyed their fatness? Is it enough that her surface shall be thronged with a population, ignorant, uncultivated, unsocial and content merely to subsist upon its generous fertility? Are all these resources of nature's bounty for the lack of exploration, to add nothing to the common stock of science, nothing to the elegancies of literature and art? Education alone can elevate the people of Georgia to a just appreciation of the advantages of her position and the brightness of her destiny.

This is not a proper occasion, if time allowed, to consider the details of a Common School system. But the obvious cause of the total inefficiency of all that the State has heretofore done, to promote popular education, illustrates most forcibly what ought to be the prominent feature of such system. That cause is the distinction which it has recognised between the poor and the rich, placing the former in the humiliating attitude of mendicants upon the charity of the latter. A freeman, however poor, is proud; therefore, there are thousands in the State of Georgia, who will disdain its bounty, so long as it comes in the name of *charity*, and will refuse to accept the facilities of education, offered under such an aspect. The schools, therefore, must be common, free, "without money and without price," for all classes and conditions of the chil-

dren of the State. It is a misnomer to call it *charity*. The State occupies a parental relationship to her people; and shall it be called *charity* for a father to educate his own children? No; because they may demand it as a right. It is the *duty* of Georgia to educate her people; a duty which she owes in good faith to the federal compact, in view of the principles of our republic and the comprehensiveness of its present and future policy, in obedience to the express and unequivocal provision of Constitutional requisition; and in justice to the political, social and moral interests of this and coming generations.

The establishment of a system of Common Schools in Georgia, has its difficulties; it is not the work of a day or a year. It requires energy, practice, perseverance, time and liberality. But if all these qualities be engaged in its prosecution, every impediment will vanish and the most happy success crown the effort. Time would fail to consider these obstacles, or answer the many objections which the spirit of captiousness or the stinginess of parsimony might suggest. One or two remarks, therefore, in relation to the expense of such a system, must suffice.

It will evidently require a liberal outlay of money. This is the only serious obstacle in the way of its organization. The moment any scheme is proposed, however important to the welfare and elevation of the State, if it require *money*, every simpering demagogue from the mountains to the seaboard, and from river to river, becomes anon the very special friend and champion of the dear people, alarms their fears, by thundering in their ears the terrors of taxation, and leads them to believe that they are to be fleeced for no good, or forsooth, for the benefit of a particular class. The sensitiveness of the popular mind on the subject of taxation, is wholesome and proper; but if indulged to a morbid excess, it may retard or totally defeat the most valuable enterprizes. A correct view of the matter cannot fail to disabuse the people of every misapprehension in reference to the policy and wisdom of public appropriations for the promotion of general education. The money expended for this object, is not local in its application or partial in its benefits. It is not for the clearing of a river here, or the construction of a Rail Road yonder; but it is to extend to all men alike the benefits and blessings of education. It is a contribution levied upon the people in proportion to their means, for the good of all the people; and they ought to suspect the motives of any man who seeks to mislead them on this vital subject. For he is an enemy to their best interest; and devoid of merit, his selfishness discerns in their enlightenment, the doom of obscurity to which they will justly consign him.

But the system once established, and the augmentation of the quantity and value of property and capital which it will necessarily produce, will raise the requisite amount of revenue for its support, without any increase of the per centum of taxation. It is easier to portray these results than to describe the process of their accrual. It will anchor our population, develope the vast natural wealth of the State, open new channels for the investment of capital, diversify their pursuits, and introduce the cultivation of many articles now unknown to the people. In 1840, the aggregate production of Massachusetts from agriculture, manufactures, commerce, mining, forests and fisheries, was $75,470,297. Her territory is but 8,000 square miles; she had a population of only 737,699, and it is proverbial of her, that her principal natural resources are "granite and ice." The aggregate production of Georgia, from the same sources, was but $35,980,363,—little over half that of Massachusetts. But she had a population of 691,392, only one-fifteenth less than that of Massachusetts; her territory is 58,000 square miles,—more than seven times that of Massachusetts;—and her natural resources are inexhaustible and incalculable. How is it then, that in 1840, Massachusetts produced nearly twice as much as Georgia? It can only be accounted for upon the fact of the superior intelligence of the former to the latter. Georgia has seven times the territory; it is naturally seven times more fertile: is capable of sustaining seven times the amount of her population; and is it not therefore evident, that if our people were as well educated, they would produce annually seven times as many dollars from their various pursuits? Is it not evident therefore, that if the amount and value of the taxable property of the State were thus augmented, that the revenue arising from taxation would be increased in a like ratio without any increase of the per centum of taxation? But Massachusetts has had a system of public education from the time of her foundation by the pilgrim fathers; and during the last ten years, it has made exhibitions of utility which is attracting the attention of her sister States. Give Georgia a system adapted to her necessities, and in a few years it will not only defray its own expenses by its augmentation of the taxable property of the State, but it will make her the noblest of the Confederacy.

Young Gentlemen of the Phi Delta and Ciceronian Societies:

Indulge a few remarks addressed particularly to yourselves, in conclusion, and I have done the task which your kindness and partiality have assigned me.

Perhaps it would have been more consonant with the custom of occasions like the present, to have conducted your minds through the gardens of ancient and modern literature.

I might have led you to the summit of Parnassus, through its valleys and green woods, and beside the limpid waters of Castalia. I might have invited you to the Athenæum, the meeting place of the philosophers, poets and rhetoricians of ancient Attica; or to stroll along the banks of the Tiber, whose glossy surface once reflected the image of the proudest city of the world; or to saunter through the Forum of Rome, with its Porticos and Basilicæ, arranged in the gorgeousness of architectural splendor. But then I should have been compelled to tell you, what you well know, that desolation has long since erected her sable banner upon the ruins of these mighty monuments of human greatness and human vanity. I might have examined the social and political structure of these ancient Republics, and trace step by step, the process by which, vice, luxury and ignorance wrought their total overthrow. Nor would the exercise have been without its lessons of instruction. As we passed along in our musings, we might have paused to pay a tribute to the poetry of Sappho, Sophocles, Euripides and Virgil; the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle; the chisel of Phidias; the pencils of Appelles and Zeuxis; and the overpowering eloquence of Demosthenes and Cicero.—But all this I have purposely avoided, preferring rather to forego the transitory eclat of such a performance, in the hope that I might draw your minds to the contemplation of a subject of vast practical importance, full of interest to this Republic, and pregnant with the destiny of unborn generations. I have considered the probable destiny of our country in the light of the past and the indications of Providence; what is necessary for the fulfilment of that destiny, and the duty of Georgia in the premises. I have endeavored to show that it is the design of Providence that this Continent shall be the broad theatre on which are to be realised the blessings of the highest civilization and the happiest manifestations of the social state; that this bright consummation is to be achieved through the agency of our Republican institutions; that public education and morality are the potent auxiliaries to be employed; and that, in fidelity to her sister States, to her Constitution, to her people, and to posterity, it is the duty of Georgia, by the immediate organization of an enlarged and liberal system of Common School education, to perform her part of this glorious enterprise of human freedom and human elevation.

Here, then, you have before you a wide field of labor, worthy your noblest powers and untiring energies, "already white for the harvest;" and the course of study which you have pursued and are pursuing in this University, eminently qualifies you for the noble engagement. In the study of Mathematics, Logic and Criticism, you have learned the principles

of physical and moral reasoning; and you are prepared to expose error, combat false theories, and defend the citadel of truth. The Ancient Classics have given you a knowledge of the power of language and the events of the past. Your Chemistry has taught you the elements of matter, the laws which govern their affinities and preside over their combination, the analysis of the atmosphere, the natures and properties of earths, the sources of their fertility and the method of their improvement. Your Philosophy has introduced you to Nature in her sublimest phenomena, has led you through the starry firmament, explained the magnitudes, densities, orbits, velocities, distances and relationships of those immense worlds which roll in grandeur through the fields of illimitable space. Guided by the lamp of Natural History, you have explored her vegetable, animal and mineral kingdoms. Political Economy has made you acquainted with the sources of national wealth and the proper subjects and modes of its application; and International Law has unfolded the duties and relationships of States and Nations. Metaphysics and Ethics have turned your thoughts inward upon the operation and powers of your own minds, and taught you your moral duties as rational and accountable beings. Above all, day by day your accomplished and pious preceptors, in the solicitude of parental tenderness, have expounded the Scriptures of Eternal Truth, enforced upon your consciences their doctrines and duties, and invited you, through the Great Atonement, to accept their glorious promises and everlasting rewards. Henceforth, young gentlemen, you take your position in the world, in the ranks of the educated men of our country, clothed with their solemn responsibilities. Devote your energies, your talents and these rich acquirements of knowledge, to the elevation of your native State, in all that is elegant in literature, valuable in the arts and sciences, and attractive in pure morality and undefiled religion.

I have spoken of a system of Common Schools, as the most efficient and proper means of promoting general intelligence among the people. But as public morality is as indispensable as education to the permanence of our republic and the accomplishment of the glorious destiny which it contemplates, it is evident that the means of cultivating the heart, must accompany those of enlightening the mind. To blend successfully these influences in the education of youth, is ever a task of extreme delicacy; and it is readily perceived that, with our long-cherished and wholesome opposition to the union of political and ecclesiastical power, in organizing such a system, it would be a subject of grave embarrassment, to fix the limit of moral instruction as part of the system itself. The Bible of course

would be prescribed as an appendage to every school. It contains the most ancient and beautiful literature, the most fervid and impassioned poetry, the purest and most elevated morality, the grandest and most sublime philosophy; and its principles are the surest guide for the legislator and statesman. To it the world is indebted for all that is valuable in science, in civil liberty, in social order, and enlightened civilization.* But as a school book, whilst its daily study could not fail to produce happy results, still it would not imbue the heart of the pupil with its spirit and form his character in its Heavenly mould, unless its doctrines be explained and its precepts enforced by appeals to the conscience. On this point no definite course could be prescribed in a system of Common School Education. To remedy this necessary imperfection, presents you a beautiful and interesting field of usefulness. It is to throw the whole weight of your character, talents and influence in favor of all those auxiliaries, which have for their object the promotion of morality and the diffusion of religious knowledge among the people. For this purpose cherish with zeal the distribution of religious books, pamphlets and tracts. Never turn a cold look of indifference upon the worthy colporteur; give him a cordial welcome; countenance and sustain him. For you may rest assured he scatters blessings in his path and light to illumine the minds of the people. Lavish your generosity in sustaining the Gospel; open wide your hospitality to its ministers; entertain its wayfaring itinerants; and if they come covered with dust, or drenched with rain, or clad in the attire of poverty, for that very reason let your welcome be the more cordial. For these are the men who, almost without reward, go into the by-ways and the hedges and scatter broad-cast among the poor, the bread of eternal life. Promote, assiduously, the establishment of Sabbath Schools. They are the nurseries of youthful piety, where are laid the solid foundations of elevated character and useful citizenship. It is the rarest thing to find a bad man in community, who received in childhood faithful, systematic Sabbath school instruction.— The tracks that are made by the footman, as he strolls along the sandy beach, are swept away by the first flow of the tide. The inscription that is carved upon the bark of the forest tree, by the idler who saunters among its recesses, is soon effaced by the hand of time. But the impressions made on the unstained tablet of childhood's intellect, are as permanent and enduring as the immortal essence that receives them. The cause of Temperance, too, is worthy the support of every patriot and christian, and should challenge your firm, steady

*"The Obligations of the World to the Bible, by Dr. Spring," is recommended to your diligent perusal

and ablest advocacy. It is the cause of the widow and orphan; it is the cause of social order and domestic tranquillity; it is the cause of your country and your God. These are the concomitants which must attend a system of Common Schools. Let the State furnish the one, and the philanthropy, benevolence, patriotism and piety of her people will furnish the other.

Whether you engage in commerce, or the more noiseless, but absorbing pursuit of agriculture; whether you pursue the profession of law or medicine; whether you choose the slippery path of politics or ascend the sacred desk, these duties are obligatory upon you; they attach to you in your character of citizen, and you cannot shrink from their discharge with impunity. But in their performance you may expect often to meet with discouragements. You will be jeered at by the thoughtless, contemned by the ignorant, denounced by the vicious; and the selfish demagogue and heartless hypocrite will smile in your face and behind your back seek to wrest your zeal in the advocacy of virtue to your utter prostration. But be not dismayed; the consciousness of the rectitude of your intentions, will convert every public disappointment into a private blessing, and impart to you a self-possession and complacency, infinitely more valuable than the hosannas of the multitude.

In glancing on the bright catalogue of distinguished personages whose labors in the cause of education, religion and benevolence have endeared their memories to the grateful affections of the patriot, the christian and the philanthropist, this occasion and this place forcibly suggest the name of one whose illustrious example is worthy your emulation. His career commenced almost with that of Georgia herself; he mingled in the Convention that remodeled and reformed her Constitution,* and his services as a minister of the Gospel, like the sunshine of noon, spread their blessings over almost her entire surface. In him the cause of Missions, of Sabbath Schools and of Temperance had an able, firm, consistent and zealous advocate, and for their promotion he lavished most ample and liberal donations.† His fame is interwoven in the history of Georgia, is identified with that large and respectable branch of the Christian Church, of which, he was alike a pillar and an ornament; and while this growing University shall stand, his name shall be perpetuated by a nobler monument than was ever reared to the memory of the victorious hero of a thousand bloody battles. However imperfect the sketch, you will not fail to recognise in the model I offer for your imitation, the portrait of the venerated and sainted MERCER.

*Vid. Mallary's Memoirs of Jesse Mercer, p. 100.
†Vid. ibid, Chap. XI, pp. 236 to 245.

ERRATA.

In the 18th line from the top of page 3d, read *teem* for "team."

In the 17th line from the top of page 5th, read *thirty* for "twenty-nine."

In last line of note on page 23d, read *Democratic* for "Domestic."

In the 3d and 9th lines from bottom of page 30th, read one *thirteenth* for "one thirtieth."

In last line of page 31st, read 1838 for "1833."

In 2nd line from bottom of page 32nd, read *Lastly* for "Last, by."

In the 13th line from top of page 34th, read *patience* for "practice."

AN ADDRESS

BEFORE THE

PHI DELTA AND CICERONIAN SOCIETIES

OF

MERCER UNIVERSITY

DELIVERED ON THE 14TH OF JULY, A D 1847

BY

HERSCHEL V. JOHNSON,

HONORARY MEMBER OF THE CICERONIAN SOCIETY

PENFIELD

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